

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 01596 271241Z

61

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 EB-11 FEA-02 TRSE-00 OMB-01 INT-08 DRC-01

/120 W

----- 103142

R 271045Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5901

INFO USINT ALGIERS

USINT DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 1596

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SA EG LY AG

SUBJECT: PRINCE SULTAN'S VISIT TO EGYPT

REF: CAIRO 1482

1. ACCORDING TO SAUDI EMBOFF, PRINCE SULTAN'S VISIT TO CAIRO WAS FOR PURPOSE OF CONSULTATIONS WITH SADAT ON BROAD SPECTRUM POLITICAL AFFAIRS, WITH "PASSING REFERENCE" TO ARMS QUESTIONS. THERE WAS NO FORMAL AGENDA FOR TALKS, BUT AMONG MOST PRESSING QUESTIONS WAS QADDAFI. SULTAN'S PREVIOUS VISIT TO TRIPOLI IN RESPONSE TO LIBYAN INVITATION WAS MADE IN HOPE PERSONAL CONTACT WITH HIGH SAG OFFICIAL COULD DO NO HARM, EVEN THOUGH SAG UNAWARE WHY INVITATION HAD BEEN ISSUED. AT THAT MEETING, HOWEVER, QADDAFI AGREED TO MAKE HIS SUBSEQUENT TRIP TO SEE FAISAL (ON WAY TO LAHORE) WHICH HAD ALLEVIATED SOME OF STRAINS BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. SULTAN DECIDED TO GO ON TO LIBYA FROM CAIRO ON MARCH 23 PRIMARILY TO KEEP UP THIS PERSONAL CONTACT, WHICH IS PARTICULARLY USEFUL SINCE GOL TACTICS CHANGE FROM DAY TO DAY.

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PAGE 02 CAIRO 01596 271241Z

2. SAUDI EMBOFF ALSO MENTIONED THAT WEAKNESS OF ASAD'S INTERNAL POSITION IS SOURCE OF WORRY TO SAG, AND PROBLEMS OF DECISION-MAKING IN SYRIA WAS IMPORTANT POINT OF DISCUSSION WITH SADAT.

3. SAUDI EMBOFF SPOKE ABOUT CURRENT ARAB FOREIGN POLICY IN CONTEXT OF SAUDI-EGYPTIAN-ALGERIAN JOINT DIPLOMACY, AND SAID ONLY PRDY AND IRAQ SEEMED UNLIKELY TO ACQUIESCE, ULTIMATELY, IN LEADERSHIP OF POWERFUL TRIUMVIRATE OF BOUMEDIENNE, FAISAL AND SADAT. LEADING EGYPTIAN JOURNALIST MADE SIMILAR POINT TO CAIRO EMBOFF MARCH 26. HE ADDED THAT SAUDI AND EGYPTIAN OIL MINISTERS HAD TOLD HIM IN VIENNA THAT BELEID HAD PLAYED VITAL AND EFFECTIVE ROLE IN GETTING EMBARGO LIFTED WITHOUT NASTY SPLIT IN ARAB RANKS.

4. COMMENT: HOWEVER INTIMATE CONSULTATIONS AND PLANNING BETWEEN RIYADH, CAIRO, AND ALGIERS MAY BE IN REALITY, "COALITION" OF LEADING ARAB SOCIALIST AND CONSERVATIVE COUNTRIES, TOGETHER WITH EGYPT, THE TRADITIONAL LINCHPIN OF JOINT ARAB DIPLOMACY, HAS NATURAL APPEAL TO EGYPTIANS. LIBYANS WOULD BE OUTFLANKED AS DEFENDERS OF FAITH BY SAUDIS AND AS REVOLUTIONARY REFORMERS BY ALGERIANS. FURTHER, ANY LIBYAN TENDENCY TO PLAY OFF CAIRO AGAINST ALGIERS MIGHT BE EFFECTIVELY STYMIED.  
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